

How to Acquire Flu Shot or H1N1 Vaccine Tip Sheet
Office of Senator Joe Lieberman

As we enter the 2009 seasonal influenza (flu) season with an increased number of H1N1 outbreaks across the State of Connecticut, I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some valuable information regarding vaccinations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the H1N1 virus is not as widespread among individuals 65 years and older in the same way as the seasonal flu. However, those individuals who fall into this category and also have a chronic illness should use precaution and consult their physician for guidance regarding vaccination. As you may know, there have been delays in the distribution of vaccines for H1N1 and the seasonal flu. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) and the CDC that as the vaccine becomes available vaccination programs and providers target the following five priority groups:

- Pregnant women
- Persons who live with or provide care for infants less than 6 months old
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel
- Persons aged 6 months to 24 years old
- Persons aged 25-64 years old who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza related complications

In addition, the ACIP recommends that if the vaccine is initially available in limited quantities, the following subgroups (listed in no particular order) receive the vaccine before others:

- Pregnant women
- Persons who live with or provide care for infants less than 6 months old
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel with direct patient contact
- Persons aged 6 months to 4 years old
- Persons aged 18-50 years old who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications

Finally, the CDC recommends that all persons 6 months and older, except those with a severe allergy to eggs, get a seasonal flu vaccine.

The following resources may be useful to you in effort to obtain a vaccination:

- Call your doctor to find out if he or she is administering the vaccine. If your doctor does not have the vaccine, ask your doctor for a referral to a doctor who is administering the vaccine.
- Call the mass dispensing area for your town to locate any public clinics scheduled. A list of mass dispensing areas and their phone numbers are available at: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/mda>
- Contact Governor Rell's H1N1 CT Hotline: 800-830-9426, Monday through Friday, 7AM-7PM to speak with an individual.
- For information regarding distribution locations for the **seasonal** flu vaccine please visit The American Lung Association's website: <http://www.flucliniclocator.org/>.

Finally, for continued updated information please visit www.flu.gov and the CDC's websites: <http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/> and <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/highrisk.htm>.